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# Press Release

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## **SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS REGIONAL CONFERENCE AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY** *Moving Forward – Planning Together*

**La Quinta – May 6, 2010** – The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Regional Conference & General Assembly continued today at the La Quinta Resort in Coachella Valley.

The program featured a panel on this year's Ballot Initiatives, SCAG's General Assembly, a keynote address by Southern California Edison's Edward T. Kjaer, Director, Electric Transportation, Advanced Technology, as well as a presentation and stakeholder discussion on SB 375.

Today's panel presented an excellent discussion of important ballot initiatives which, if passed, will have dramatic and lasting effects upon the lives of Californians," said **Glen Becerra, Mayor Pro Tem City of Simi Valley and Chair of SCAG's Legislative/Communications & Membership Committee**. "Whether we are talking about the future of our state's water supply and infrastructure; protection of locally approved tax measures from the state for use not consistent with the voters' intent; or the future pace of carbon and greenhouse gas regulation in California, forums like the one today are what is needed to bring together for honest discussion, the diverse perspectives of a wide array of stakeholders; committed to improving our state now and for future generations."

The General Assembly provided an opportunity to watch a video presentation about SCAG's accomplishments over the past year, recognize the leadership of the outgoing President, El Centro City Councilman Jon A. Edney, and pass the gavel to the incoming President, Highland City Councilman Larry McCallon. "Though the hard work is just beginning, as we look out toward the 2012 Regional Transportation Plan process, a solid framework of collaboration with stakeholders, partner agencies and the business community as well as a better perception of SCAG and what we do, can all be credited to the guidance and leadership of President Edney," said **Hasan Ikhmeta, Executive Director of SCAG**. "We are excited to see his framework continue and magnify under the Presidency of Larry McCallon."

For the grand finale, SCAG presented the greenhouse gas reduction targets the agency plans to submit to the Air Resources Board along with some sample scenarios for how to achieve the targets. The presentation was followed by a healthy debate with representatives of the business community, city, county and resources agencies along with the members of the Regional Council. **James N. Goldstene, Executive Officer of the California Air Resources Board** said, “We appreciate the strong effort by SCAG to work with the California Air Resources Board and the communities in Southern California to make SB 375 a success. The theme of this conference reflects what's happening in the region: that we are planning together -- and we will continue to plan together -- so that we can move forward to a more sustainable future.”

By the end of the second day, SCAG’s Regional Conference & General Assembly hosted over 600 members and interested stakeholders, including **Greg McWilliams, Co-Chair of the Southern California Leadership Council** who described his organization’s increased involvement with SCAG as timely and meaningful. "Over the last year, the Southern California Leadership Council has formed a great working relationship with Southern California Association of Governments. For California to continue to prosper, government and business leaders must work together to provide solutions that address key issues. Today's event showed the value in this type of team work and we were proud to be a participant,” he said.

In closing remarks on his new presidency and the new grant programs SCAG debuted at the conference, **McCallon** said, “I am extremely honored and humbled to serve as the President of the Southern California Association of Governments and look forward to working with each of the jurisdictions, transportation commissions, subregions, and all of our partners, as we continue to plan the future of this region. The voluntary competitive grants SCAG put forward today will assist cities in planning activities and reward cities for reducing greenhouse gasses, demonstrating SCAG’s continued commitment to help its member cities. These collaborative efforts will help our economy grow and ensure sustainable healthy communities for our citizens,” McCallon said.

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### **About SCAG**

*SCAG is the nation’s largest metropolitan planning organization, representing six counties, 189 cities and more than 18 million residents. SCAG undertakes a variety of planning and policy initiatives to plan for a livable and sustainable Southern California now and in the future. For more information about SCAG’s regional efforts, please visit [www.scag.ca.gov](http://www.scag.ca.gov).*